



Adobe InDesign CS Tips and Tricks The 10 Greatest Features

There's no doubt about it. InDesign is the page-layout program for the new millennium, but what makes it so much better than Adobe® PageMaker®? A lot. Here are ten of the most useful InDesign CS features for creating yearbook spreads:

- **LIVE UPDATING:** Nearly every change you make in InDesign is viewable on screen as elements are adjusted. You don't have to input data into a dialog box and click OK to see the results applied.
- **DROP CAP:** PageMaker could do a drop cap, but InDesign does a drop cap right the first time. Not only can you change the number of lines to drop a letter and then change it again instantly, but you can even change the font or style of the drop cap and the text reflows automatically.
- **EYE DROPPER:** The Eye Dropper tool allows you to "pick up" attributes of one element and apply them to another element. For example, you can pick a color straight out of a placed digital image and apply that same exact color to the headline text or a rule line. You can also select the type characteristics of one text frame and apply their attributes to another text frame.
- **FONT MANAGEMENT:** Using Type > Find Font, you can identify all the fonts used in a document and update or replace any font. Additionally, fonts are automatically organized by font family in the Type > Font menu making your font list easier to search through as it is more organized. To prevent output problems, InDesign does not allow simulated versions of bold or italic type styles to be created (i.e. menu styling).
- **INFO PALETTE:** Often digital images placed into a layout are mistakenly enlarged or stretched. While the quality of the image appears fine on the screen, the resolution has been lowered and will appear bit-mapped when printed. To check the resolution, click on the image with the Direct Selection tool, then go to Window > Info palette. Make sure the Effective resolution is at least 300 ppi. To make sure the image is still in proportion, the Effective resolution height and width ppi should be the same.
- **TRANSPARENCY:** This feature gives designers a unique option in a page-layout program. By adjusting the opacity of any element, including photographs, art and type, one element can be seen through another element. Transparency allows for trendy one-step "Gaussian Blur" drop shadows (Object > Drop Shadow) and feathering of element edges (Object > Feather).
- **PREVIEW PLACED FILES:** When placing a digital photograph (File > Place) or any other element into InDesign, the Place dialog box provides a preview of the selected file. When faced with a long list of images from which to choose, you'll never place the incorrect file again.
- **TEXT FRAMES:** The single biggest difference between PageMaker and InDesign is the use of frames as placeholders for all text blocks when designing your layout. You can select multiple text frames and change all the type characteristics at the same time.
- **AUTO TEXT COLUMNS:** You no longer need to use Columns, Guides, and the Text and Pointer tools to create multiple columns of text on your layout. After composing your text in a frame, simply use Object > Text Frame Options. In the Text Frame Options dialog box, set the number of columns you want in the frame, and the amount of space (usually one pica) between the column. You can even adjust the width of the frame and the columns will automatically reset and reflow.
- **UNDO:** Undo, undo, undo, undo, undo...undo...undo...undo... (Edit > Undo). The number of undos is only limited by the amount of RAM on your computer.